

Saluting Our Sentor

Bloomingdale Senior Sydney McLaughlin won't let a global pandemic deter her. She and the rest of the Class of 2020 are still moving ahead with their lives.

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See pp. 6 - 11.



COMMUNITY CORNER BL SPECIAL DISTRICT Page 3

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BLOOMINGDALE STRONG Pages 4 & 5

SENIOR SALUTE Pages 6 - 11

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS Page 12

> 813 STRONG Page 13

EASTER BUNNY VISITS Pages 14 & 15



WINNER

2013, 2014, 2016 & 2018 Hillsborough County Neighborhood Recognition Award

Best Communications Newsletter Category

CUOTE OF THE MONTH "Once you choose hope, anything's possible." *Christopher Reeve*

BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

YOUR INSIDE CONNECTIONS

Bloomingdale Homeowners Association, Inc. 3509 Bell Shoals Road - Valrico, Florida 33596 - (813) 681-2051 Email: Bloomingdale.Homeowners@gmail.com Website: www.BloomingdaleHOA.com

BHA Board meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at the Bloomingdale Community Office.

President: Suzy Watts Vice President: Sean Donahue **Treasurer:** Grace Lewis



Bobbi Ferraro Billy Hightower Charlie Woodcock

Directors at Large:

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER



JOY BOISSELLE

Editor - The Bloomingdale Gazette 3509 Bell Shoals Rd.

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The official publication of the BHA since 1980

The Gazette is delivered free to Bloomingdale residents on the first Saturday of each month.

J Tampa Bay



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THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE

BHA COMMUNITY CORNER

DON'T FORGET TO LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

Membership 2020; Thank you, Neighbors!

Even amid COVID-19 concerns, the BHA continues to receive your membership checks. We are grateful for your support. When safe to do so, we will resume normal operations.

The Gazette continues publication at a decreased page count. Delivery for now is the first Wednesday of the month. County info updates will appear primarily on our Facebook page for more current reporting.

This month and next month. our newspaper will focus on community positivity. We hope to present the best of our community. Have a story about or picture of some of our shining stars? Send to inbloomingdalenews@gmail.

BHA Board Meeting

Virtual Meeting Until Further Notice / Tuesday, May 12, 6:30 p.m.

BRIEFS

2020 BJ Stelter/Community Scholarship Winner To Be Announced this Month! Stay tuned!



Campo YMCA & OneBlood Host Blood Drive May 21, 11am - 5pm

Call Campo YMCA at 813-684-1371or register at www.oneblood.org/ donate-now. Donors receive a OneBlood t-shirt and a wellness checkup. Call 1.888.9.DONATE (1.888.936.6283).



Mrs. Baker Retires at 40 Years; Your Help Is Needed For a Special Project

Alafia Elementary Kindergarten Teacher Barbara Baker will retire after 40 years of teaching! We are working on a special gift and need pictures! We want pictures of all students she has taught through the years. Please include the Student's NAME and the YEAR they were in Mrs. Baker's Kindergarten class. Send pictures to: alafiagators@



gmail.com by May 22. Questions? Contact: Rebekah Tilson@ 8136902460 or Laura Latocki@ 586-443-9450.

THE COMMUNITY'S COMMON AREA CONNECTION By Tom Leech, BSD President

May Meeting

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, BSD meetings are online. The next meeting is May 11 at 6:30 p.m. Access the meeting via GoToMeeting at: www. gotomeet.me/MiriamLeech/ may-11-2020-regular-boardmeeting. To speak at the meeting, email bstd@verizon. net. The public has three minutes to make comment or ask questions per Hillsborough County policy. For BSD information, visit https:// mydistrictwebsite.com/. Search Bloomingdale Special.

BLOOMINGDALE SPECIAL DISTRICT

3509 Bell Shoals Road Valrico, Florida 33596 (813) 684-6667 Office (813) 684-2358 Fax BSTD@verizon.net https://mydistrictwebsite.com/ Hours: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Tom Leech, President Charlie Woodcock, Treasurer Russell Jones, Trustee Randy Kehrmeyer, Trustee Claire Letkiewicz, Trustee

Common Area Sidewalk Repairs

I have previously discussed the County's on-going sidewalk repair project and the related challenges. The project is nearing completion. County is working with the District to repair portions of the irrigation system damaged during sidewalk repairs.

Sign Cleaning/Painting

District-wide sign cleaning and painting is complete. Sign deterioration is a regular problem in our Florida climate. The District is will inspect signage more frequently to identify and address the problem earlier.

Community Revitalization Update

For over a year, we have worked on a project to revitalize the community beginning with a redesign of the major entrances into Bloomingdale. The project has suffered a series of setbacks, due mostly to legal complications and the County's review process. I am working with the Board of County Commissioners to get our project back on track. I will update you as things progress.

From County Emergency Policy Group Meeting

"The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season, which starts June 1, is predicted to be a busy one. While the possibility of a hurricane or other disaster during a pandemic presents many challenges, Hillsborough County Office of Emergency Management Director



Tim Dudley said the County is preparing to meet these head-on. Plans are being adjusted to reflect how operations would be handled, while work continues on developing public preparedness messaging." For information, visit www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/residents/public-safety/ emergency-management/stay-safe. *Residents should prepare now*.

MAY 2020

We are Bloomingdale Strong! Spreading Messages of Joy, Hope, and Kindness

Courtesy Photos, unless otherwise noted

Few could have imagined how our lives would change thanks to COVID-19. In our new normal we have become tutors and teachers, chefs from morning to night, activity directors, mediators and more.

While it would be so easy to feel stressed by all the changes and uncertainty. In Bloomingdale, we have seen acts of kindness, sacrifice, creativity and generosity everywhere. Our community's residents are an inspiration; many finding ways to encourage one another and stay engaged.

On the following pages, we hope to celebrate just a few of the wonderful events and people who are doing their best to brighten our lives. In every issue, we hope to spread positivity. Send us your photos and stories to InBloomingdaleNews@gmail.com.



With no typical birthday parties in the foreseeable future, Tucker, Emma Kate and Madison McKendree head out to spread some mobile birthday cheer.



As more and more families headed outside for exercise and sunshine, residents made things more exciting with window scavenger hunts. Kids out for a bike ride or walk, counted teddy bears, bunnies, rainbows, hearts and more.



Front yard smiles decorated the lawn for Henry Crawford's 7th birthday!

"Positivity always wins... Always." — Gary Vaynerchuk



Jackson and Scarlett Grafton admire their sidewalk masterpiece. Photo: Rachel Grafton



Craig and Katie Campbell getting some quarantine Daddy-Daughter time. Mom Kane Campbell said, "We are definitely practicing social distancing, staying home, and our daughter has found art to be relaxing and therapeutic. Her message was to 'Spread love, not germs'. We hope that all this ends soon and pray for everyone on the frontline, first responders, groceries stores employees and all service workers who provide us with essentials."



"Pets are our best friends" took on a whole new meaning as shelters emptied out as humans felt the need for our fourlegged friends. Pictured Deidre Morgan's grandbaby Vino.



Alafia Elementary hasn't forgotten their gators! Mom Laura with Jayden and Autumn Latocki



Another popular creative outlet was sidewalk chalk art. Walkers were amazed at the masterpieces our community artists created. Spreading Joy is Bloomingdale's Abby Patton.



Sydney Dodson, Kailee's sister provided inspiration for the April showers art.



"Find people who will make you better." — Michelle Obama

Some took star gazing to a whole new level. On April 7, Thomas Owen viewed the brightest supermoon of 2020 through his telescope and took pictures through the telescope lens with his phone. Photo: Jane Owen



Photo: Thomas Owen

"My mama always said, life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get." — Forrest Gump



Chalk artist Kailee Hodson, Age 13

Connecting Through Music

Brief and Photos: Jane Owen

Bloomingdale sophomore Jordan Hierholzer and his cello teacher Diego Villa delighted the Fairway Manor neighborhood with a yard concert on April 19. The yard concert brought joy to neighbors. People drove up to listen, families biking watched from the road, a lady on a walk stopped to listen, families brought chairs to sit (keeping appropriate distance from other families) and few neighbors on the street stood in their driveways. It was a beautiful display of talent and love.

(Editor's Note: Jordan Hierholzer is an accomplished member of the Bloomingdale Orchestra. This year he played with the Tampa Metropolitan Youth Orchestra under the direction of Dr William Wiedrich (USF). Last year he played with the TMYO under the direction of Jason Jerald who is the orchestra director at Blake High school.)



The Class of 2020 aka the Class of COVID-19 may

not know it yet, but they are making history. They will be famous forever and remembered for many reasons.

They are the first seniors to miss the last half of their senior year in the traditional sense – hanging out with friends, face-to-face learning from their teachers and mentors, and attending and being a part of school sports and activities like the prom. On the lighter side, this class can claim the title of Senior Skip Day Champions forever.

The Class of 2020's new normal includes completing classes through virtual schooling, no end-of-year testing and experiencing a "possible" virtual graduation celebration. Parents who used to stress over these technologically obsessed kids are now grateful this generation is so tech-savvy.

Along with the rest of the world, our seniors will always remember where they were, and what they were doing during the global pandemic of 2020. However, we hope they remember this not only as the time of the pandemic, but also as the time they began their accelerated journey into adulthood.

Don't forget your dreams and the brilliant future to come.

We salute you, seniors, for your resilience, perseverance, and ability to reach even higher for the stars, no matter the obstacles. You are tough! Go and conquer the world! Congratulations!

To see a beautiful tribute to the Class of 2020, check out: https://youtu.be/PBAKHGTfmaQ.

"The best way to predict your future is to create it." — Abraham Lincoln



"Everything negative – pressure, challenges – is all an opportunity for me to rise." — Kobe Bryant

Fierce Talented Artistic

THE BLOOMINGDALE GAZETTE



Abby Rendon // BSHS / Rajun Bull Marching Band Section Leader, Sr Class Steering Committee, Crimson Guard Captain / Attending University of Florida (UF) majoring in Mathematics. She hopes to be a college professor.

Alexander Fisher // BSHS / Attending Florida State University (FSU)



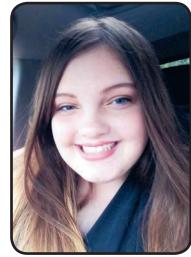


Alexander Marcinkowski // Pepin Academy / "Congratulations on all you have accomplished!" Matt & Jennifer Marcinkowski

You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have. — Cayla Mills



Alexis Guyton // BSHS / "I plan on going to college for criminal justice and maybe starting a business with my sister and my mom with baking."



Alexis Michael // BSHS

"Life is what happens when you're busy making other plans." — John Lennon.



Alyssa McDonald // BSHS / Attending University of Central Florida (UCF), majoring in Criminal Justice



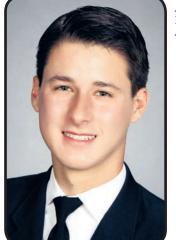
Angellina Fedullo // BSHS / Attending FSU, majoring in vocal performance



Annalisa Mengel // BSHS / Attending Auburn University on an Army ROTC Nursing Scholarship, majoring in Nursing

Arianna Fratta // BSHS / Attending Johnson & Wales University in North Miami, Studying Baking & Pastry





Arthur (A.J.) Egan // BSHS / Attending FSU

Aryn Kathryn Hillary // BSHS / Attending UF / "Though this was not what we envisioned for the end of your senior year; you have handled the situation with grace and poise. You make us so proud, and we know you will achieve many more great things in your future. GO GATORS!" Mom and Dad



Fierce Talented Artistic



Ashley Hornsby // BSHS / Attending FSU, majoring in nursing



Audra Nikolajski // BSHS and Bloomingdale Gazette Student Reporter / Attending USF Honors Program

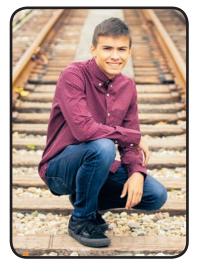


Ava Criden // BSHS Honor Court / Attending FSU, nursing major / "We couldn't be prouder of our daughter! Her long-term goal is to become a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner." Stephen and Elisa Criden

"Do or do not. There is no try." — Yoda

Chloe Ferguson // BSHS with honors / Attending USF Honor College as a Director's Scholar Recipient, will and study medicine





Christian Quesada // BSHS / Serving his country beginning in August at Air Force Basic Training in San Antonio, Texas. / Family Message "Both his bonus dad and maternal grandfather served and retired from the Air Force. His paternal grandfather also served in the Navy. We are all so proud of him. His hobby is working on old cars and he restored a 1978 Chevy Camaro. He is now working on restoring a 1971 Chevy Camaro."

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started." — Mark Twain



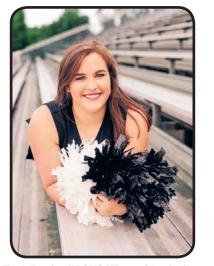
Conor Ford // BSHS / Attending University of South Florida (USF), undecided major

Derek Plunkett // BSHS / Attending "Universal Technical Institute" in Orlando to study Auto Technician Training





Devin Dyer // BSHS / Appointed to The United States Merchant Marine Academy, will be on the dive team.



Emily Rendon // BSHS / Varsity Cheerleader, Chamber Orchestra, Student Government / Attending FSU majoring in statistics



Erin Leigh // BSHS / Attending Rollins College, playing college basketball



"Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened." — Dr. Seuss

Ethan H Romero // Alafia Elementary, Burns Middle School, and Durant High School / Hillsborough Community College (HCC) dual enrollment student, on the path to becoming a Hillsborough County EMT Fire Fighter

Fierce Talented Artistic Cree

ng Independent Courageous



Ethan Shaffer // BSHS / Attending UF Pre-Med / "We are so proud of you as a son, brother and person! We love you!" Mom and Dad





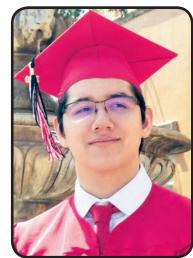
Gabriella Martinez // BSHS / Senior Class President / Many talents and passions, which include dancing, singing, acting, and performing in general / Received AA degree this year from HCC. will continue as a Junior at USF to major in Psychology

Jeramy Butler // BSHS / Attending USF and joining Air Force ROTC

Jessica Hayes // BSHS / USF, wants to be a kindergarten teacher / "I know that every moment we have prepared her for is here ... preparing for the ups and downs failures and successes... I am amazed, astonished and overwhelmed on how resilient and strong the class of 2020 is. ... these last weeks of canceled spring breaks prom senior pranks senior breakfast multiple banquets and yes even senior skip day is just dress rehearsal for something bigger ... God still sits on His throne and is control." Mom Lois Hayes



Isabella Manera // BSHS / Attending UF, to study Animal Science on the pre-vet track.



Jackson Langone // BSHS / Wants to pursue a career in the medical field and hopes to one day open his own gym

"In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: It goes on." — Robert Frost



Jillian Ford // BSHS / Attending Farrier training at the Kentucky Horseshoeing School.

"You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think." — Christopher Robbin

Kailey Harrigan // BSHS / Attending Jacksonville University on a softball scholarship

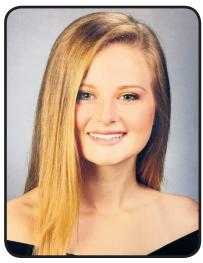


John Tierney // BSHS / Attending USF

Jordyn Fisher // BSHS / Attending FSU



ative Inspirational Excellent



Kelsey Taylor Penn // BSHS / Attending UCF



Kendra Hacker // BSHS / Attending UF studying Mathematics

"Just keep swimming. —Dory



Kenzie Patton // BSHS / Plans Undecided



Kylie Michelle Kuhn // BSHS with Honors / Attending UCF / "We are so proud of you Kylie!" Love, Mom and Dad

"If you're going through hell keep going."

Winston Churchill



"The best is yet to be." —Robert Browning

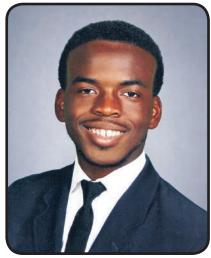
Madison Jordan // BSHS with Honors / Orchestra, SGA, Beta club / Attending USF / "We couldn't be prouder."

> Marissa Hagenbarth // BSHS / Attending USF to major in biology and eventually study dentistry





Matthew Allred // BSHS / Attending Florida Southern College, will play college soccer



Maurice Collins, Jr. // BSHS / Enlisting in the Marines... Semper Fi!

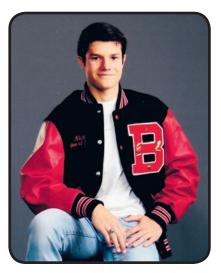


Nicholas Fiorita // BSHS / Attending Coastal Carolina University to study Marine Science, excited to be a Fishing Team member



Nick Klaeren // BSHS / Attending Florida PolyTechnic University, Lakeland / "We are so proud of you, Love, Mom, Dad and Molly xoxo"

Nick O'Brien // BSHS / Attending UCF / "Nick, we are so proud of all you have accomplished these past four years. We are excited to see what your future holds. Good luck at UCF. GO KNIGHTS! Love, Mommy, Daddy, P.J. and Charlie"



Fierce Talented Artistic



Niesta Gateka // BSHS / Attending the University of Tampa, studying for a Bachelor of Nursing



Nya King // BSHS / Plans to play basketball on the next level, major in kinesiology to become a physical therapist and minor in business management

Sean Dowd // BSHS / Attending USF, Studying Health Sciences to become a physical therapist

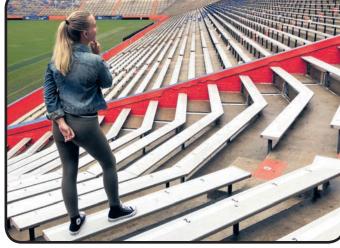




Shae Zugay // BSHS / Attending UF to study Business/Finance



Sophia Slavin // BSHS / Attending UF (Honors Program)



Sydney McLaughlin // BSHS top 10 in her class / Attending UF / "Sydney, you continue to amaze us daily. We love you." Dad, Mom and Josh



"Tough times never last, tough people do." — Robert H. Schuller

Taber Pierce // BSHS / Attending FSU to study finance

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience but where he stands in times of challenge and controversy." — Martin Luther King Jr.



Florida on a softball scholarship. She will be

Victoria Bratz // BSHS / Attending Florida Southern College, to study Psychology



Wesley Harnage // BSHS / Attending USF, to major in Finance then, transfer to UF for Law school

Fierce Talented Ortistic

MAY 2020

The St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry at St. Stephen Church is Open

SVdP Press Release

The St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) food pantry is open to people in our area that are in need or may have recently lost their jobs. The pantry operates at St. Stephen Catholic Church, located off Boyette Rd. at 10118 St. Stephen Rd., Riverview. Pantry hours are Fridays from 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The pantry is currently operating as a drive-thru in front of the church's Family

Life Center. Visitors stay in their cars and volunteers wearing face masks and gloves load the food directly into the car so there is no contact between people.

Donations of food and/or money are also accepted on Friday mornings between 7 a.m. until noon. Drop-offs can be made at the drive-thru in front of the Family Life Center. Checks should be made out to SVdP.



Seeds of Hope, Inc. Collects School Lunch Leftovers in Bloomingdale Brief: Jane Owen

Leftover unopened packaged school lunch items are being collected in our community to donate to *Seeds of Hope, Inc.* Donations can include, but are not limited to milk, juice pouches, fruit/vegetables, cereal, snacks, etc.



Bloomingdale Drop-Off Location: 2518 Culbreath Cove Court Valrico 33596

Days/Times: Thursdays 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

A cooler will be in the driveway for donations

This collection is *only* for leftovers from the weekly school lunch distribution.

For those interested in donating beyond

school lunch leftovers, Seeds of Hope needs the following non-perishable foods: pasta, pasta sauce, cereal, pancake mix, rice, canned veggies, canned tuna or chicken.

Daily drop off locations for non-perishable food are: Scrambled Egg, Fishhawk Fellowship, Grace UMC, Eaton Realty, and Motion Chiro.

GET READY FOR THE MOST ACTIVE SUMMER ADVENTURE EVER! A UNIQUE CAMP EACH WEEK



Kids 'R' Kids is excited to launch a new twist on camp where kids are redefining summer and turning ordinary days into the extraordinary. Just as fragments inside a kaleidoscope fuse together to captivate us with a new perspective, **Kaleidoscope 360°** will spin this summer into a unique dimension of discovery, fun, and friendships.

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By Jane Owen

During quarantine, Fitniche Running and Fitness owner Rich Wills has issued the 813 community a challenge – the 813 Strong Challenge. The challenge is to complete the total distance of a marathon (26.2 miles) by walking, running, cycling, rollerblading, swimming, or other method over 30 days.

Customers approached Wills with the idea for the virtual challenge. They wanted to stay healthy and support the local Bloomingdale store. The running and fitness store is newly relocated next to Tide Dry Cleaners.

"The genesis for the race is- Nothing better you can do for your immune system than get out and walk or run for 20-30 minutes a day," Willis said, adding "Proceeds for the virtual challenge will also generate some sorely needed income for our store."

Registration is \$26.20, All registered participants will receive their registration fee back in the form of a \$26.20 coupon to the FITniche store, an official 813 Strong t-shirt, participant medal, and opportunities to win prize packages and giveaways.

Register by May 14 at https://runsignup.com/Race/FL/Lakeland/813S trong2020262Challenge OR go to the FITniche page (https://fitniche. com/) and follow the challenge links towards the bottom of the page.







Much to the delight of children and families, the Easter Bunny drove through our Bloomingdale neighborhoods the day before Easter on April 11.

Bloomingdale resident, Irene Rapoza, had the idea because she wanted to spread some joy during this time of quarantine. Daughter Breanna Newby posted on the Bloomingdale Community Facebook page to see if there was interest and support. Based on the tremendous response, a costume was ordered, a route selected and the Easter Bunny visit was on!

Kids lined the streets for a glimpse of the Bunny and a possible photo op! Irene wore the Bunny costume, Breanna drove the truck and her grandfather, Gill Rapoza, rode along holding a Happy Easter sign out the window.

Breanna said, "The best part of it all was just seeing so many kids happy and excited. It was awesome to see the community filled with happiness!" It was nothing short of special and it was all about love for our community.



Breanna and her mother Irene (the Easter Bunny)



Avigail DeRyke (left) and Adalynn DeRyke (right)



Even behind gated Cambridge Cove, the Bunny made the rounds. Aliz Dean is all smiles.



Photobombing E.B. with Ariel, iyLa and Austin Burcham



Olivia and Allison Peloso Social Distancing with the Easter Bunny!



Left to Right: Spencer, Callaway, and Kamryn Photo: Jane Owen





Lily and Everly Photo: Jane Owen



J.R. Singer, Grant Peters, and Ashlee Singer Waiting for the Bunny!



Lavender (9), Lamar (7), Liam (5), and Landon (3).



The Bunny and company started at 9:45 a.m.and got home at 2:30 p.m. going through as many neighborhoods as they could. According to Breanna, it was long but incredible day for all of them, "The whole experience was just awesome!" That was true for everyone out that day. A big thank you to Irene, Breanna, and Gill from Bloomingdale!



Abigail and Lucy Filichia dressed in their bunny best!

Landon and Chloe Bayless

"This was such an amazing way to bring cheer to our kids during this difficult time! Landon and Chloe loved the visit!" Parents Jerry & Michelle Bayless





Nevaeh Park is stylin' with the Bunny.



Courtesy Photos, unless otherwise noted

Dry cleaning. But cleaner.



Carside service. 24/7 drop-off and pickup. Express checkout. We're not just here to clean your clothes. We're here to clean up your entire dry cleaning experience.

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*When cleaned using the GreenEarth® Cleaning process compared to the solvent most traditionally used by dry cleaners

